

Message Text

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ORIGIN HEW-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 OES-09 SES-02 ABF-01 FS-01
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DRAFTED BY DHEW/OASH/OIH/RDFISCHER:AH
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P 281823Z SEP 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:

TAGS: TPHY, OSCI, TBIO, EG

SUBJECT: ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR EGYPTIAN MINISTRY OF
HEALTH

REFERENCES: (A) STATE 206465 (B) CAIRO 19569

1. HEW/OIH REGRETS APPARENT MISCOMMUNICATION IN REFTELS
ESPECIALLY SINCE FISCHER AT OIH ONLY RECEIVED COPY OF
REFTEL B A COUPLE OF HOURS BEFORE SCHEDULED MEETING ON
SEPTEMBER 12 WITH GOMAA. ALTHOUGH HEW HAD ACTION ON
REFTEL B, IT WAS MISROUTED AT HEW AND FISCHER WAS UNABLE
TO SECURE FULL CONSULTATION ON THIS SUBJECT WITH AID/W
BEFORE MEETING WITH GOMAA. CONTENT OF THAT MEETING IS
DISCUSSED BELOW, PARA. 4.
2. OIH IS MOST CONCERNED WITH EMBASSY COMMENT IN REFTEL B
THAT THIS SUBJECT WAS VIEWED MOOT FOLLOWING EMBASSY'S
OCTOBER '77 MEETING WITH BEDRAN AND GOMAA. THIS SUBJECT
WAS LIVELY TOPIC OF DISCUSSION DURING JUNE 3-6 MEETING OF
JWGMC IN CAIRO. FROM OIH'S PERSPECTIVE, THEY KEPT EMBASSY

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STAFF ADVISED OF ALL DISCUSSIONS WITH EGYPTIAN COUNTERPARTS

DURING THAT MEETING. AS A RESULT OF ALL DISCUSSIONS,
WHICH ARE REVIEWED IN PARA. 3 BELOW, THERE WAS MUTUAL
AGREEMENT THE REPORT OF FIFTH SESSION, JWGM, INCLUDE
FOLLOWING SENTENCES. QUOTE IT WAS AGREED THAT ADMINISTRA-
TIVE SUPPORT NEEDS TO BE PROVIDED FOR THE COORDINATING

FUNCTIONS OF THE JWGM. THE EGYPTIAN COORDINATOR WILL DEVELOP A PROPOSAL FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES IN CAIRO. UNQUOTE EMBASSY ALSO RECEIVED REQUESTED PROPOSAL FROM GOMAA ON JUNE 10.

3. AS OIH RECALLS THE EVENTS LEADING TO PARAGRAPH IN REPORT OF JWGM, THIS SUBJECT WAS INTRODUCED BY THE MINISTER BEDRAN AND GOMAA DURING ONE OF THEIR EARLY MEETINGS. HEW EXPRESSED EMPATHY WITH THE EGYPTIAN NEED ALONG WITH A CAVEAT THAT POSSIBLE MEANS OF SUPPORT WOULD HAVE TO BE DISCUSSED WITH EMBASSY AND AID/CAIRO. IN NUMEROUS INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH USAID STAFF AND WITH SCIATT, HEW WAS ADVISED ON THE NATURE OF EMBASSY CONCERNS. IN SUMMARY, THESE WERE (A) EMBASSY FELT THIS WAS BASICALLY GOE RESPONSIBILITY AND (B) THAT THE INITIAL PROPOSAL TO EMBASSY WAS VIEWED AS AN EFFORT TO CONSOLIDATE OR CENTRALIZE POWER IN THE MOH AROUND GOMAA/BEDRAN. HEW PRESENTED SOME ARGUMENT WITH EMBASSY CONCERNS ON POINT (A) ALTHOUGH THEY ENTIRELY CONCEDED TO EMBASSY'S PEROGATIVES IN THE FINAL JUDGMENTS. HEW ARGUED THAT VIRTUALLY ALL JWG ACTIVITIES IN EGYPT ARE IN SUPPORT OF BASIC GOE RESPONSIBILITIES AND THAT THIS KIND OF CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT COULD BE VIEWED AS ASSISTING THE MOH, AS WELL AS USG AGENCIES, WITH THE DIFFICULT TASK OF MORE ADEQUATELY COORDINATING THIS PROGRAM FUNDED BY USG RESOURCES. IT WAS ALSO OBSERVED THAT HEW PROVIDED SIMILAR ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO US EMBASSY'S FROM BOTH THE SFCP RESOURCES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND DOLLAR HEW APPROPRIATIONS. ALTHOUGH NOT NOTED AT THAT TIME, AND IN REFERENCE TO EMBASSY'S DISCUSSION OF QUOTE BRIDGE SUPPORT ONLY UNQUOTE IN REFTEL B, HEW WOULD OBSERVE AT THIS POINT THAT USG SUPPORT OF THESE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS ARE NATURALLY SELF-LIMITING IN THAT THEY WOULD INVOLVE ONLY SFCP WHICH ITSELF IS LIMITED IN TIME. IT WAS ON THE ISSUE OF THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF THIS SUPPORT, POINT B ABOVE, THAT HEW DID NOT FEEL IT HAD FINAL READOUT FROM THE EMBASSY. IT WAS MAINLY THIS ISSUE IN WHICH HEW WAS SEEKING A QUOTE DEFINITIVE EXPRESSION OF EMBASSY OPINION UNQUOTE IN REF. A. DURING CAIRO JWG MEETING, HEW FULLY AGREED WITH EMBASSY OBSERVATION THAT SUCH SUPPORT WOULD CONSOLIDATE POWER CENTRALLY AROUND GOMAA ALTHOUGH THIS COULD BE JUDGED AS HELPFUL. FROM AN ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL VIEWPOINT, HEW HAD LONG FELT IT WAS THIS LACK OF CENTRAL CONTROL IN EGYPT WHICH PERMITTED HEALTH INSTITUTIONS AND INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE PROGRAMATIC END-RUNS AROUND MINISTER BEDRAN'S MORE REASONABLE HEALTH PRIORITIES FOR EGYPT. GOMAA HIMSELF WAS ALREADY NOMINALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING THE PROGRAM IN EGYPT AND WAS SIMPLY UNABLE TO DO SO, IN PART, DUE TO THE EGYPTIAN CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM WHICH EMBASSY

NOTED IN REF. B HEW WAS PREPARED TO CONCEDE TO, WITHOUT ARGUMENT, ANY EMBASSY JUDGMENT ON THE BROADER POLITICAL

IMPACT OF SUCH CENTRALIZING SUPPORT AND IT WAS AWAITING FINAL EMBASSY JUDGMENTS.

4. AS ANTICIPATED, GOMAA IMMEDIATELY RAISED THIS ISSUE DURING THE MEETING WITH FISCHER ON SEPTEMBER 12. DURING THAT MEETING HE ALSO GAVE FISCHER A COPY OF A JUNE 10 LETTER TO ADDISON RICHMOND FORWARDING A BUDGET PLAN FOR THIS ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. FISCHER COULD ONLY SAY THAT THIS PLAN HAD NOT YET BEEN FORWARDED TO OIH FROM EMBASSY. IN VIEW OF REFTTEL B, FISCHER COULD ONLY SAY THAT OIH, EMBASSY CAIRO, AND USAID/CAIRO HAD YET TO DISCUSS OTHER ASPECTS OF THIS ISSUE. FISCHER DID REVIEW BUDGET PLAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BRIEFLY WITH GOMAA AND MADE SOME GENERAL OBSERVATION, INCLUDING: (A) THE BUDGET WAS TOO LARGE, E.G., REQUEST FOR MICROBUS AND COMPLETE PROVISIONS FOR OFFICE DID NOT SEEM WITHIN PURVIEW OF PREVIOUS DISCUSSION; (B) IT WAS INCOMPLETE E.G., LE 4,180 FOR MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES MUST BE EXPLAINED, AND A GENERAL SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR STAFF MUST ULTIMATELY BE PROVIDED. GOMAA WAS ENCOURAGED TO RECONTACT A. RICHMOND ON HIS RETURN TO CAIRO. GOMAA TOOK THSE COMMENTS WITH EQUINIMITY. REMAINDER OF MEETING WAS CONCERNED GENERAL PLANS FOR SECRETARY CALIFANO'S PENDING VISIT.

5. EMBASSY CAN BE ASSURED THAT THE FORGOING PARAGRAPHS OF OIH PERSPECTIVE, REPRESENT THE TOTAL OF HEW CONTACTS AND DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOE ON THIS SUBJECT. INDEED DR. BRYANT CHOSE NOT TO MENTION THIS ISSUE, AS WOULD HAVE BEEN OTHERWISE APPROPRIATE AND DESIRABLE, IN HIS LETTER OF AUG. 28 TO GOMAA AND HEW WILL NOT FURTHER CONTACT MOH ON THIS SUBJECT UNTIL GAME PLAN HAS BEEN WORKED OUT IN CONCERT WITH EMBASSY AND USAID/CAIRO. AT THIS POINT IT WOULD SEEM THAT EMBASSY SHOULD FORWARD COMMENTS ON GOMAA'S JUNE 10 PROPOSAL TO OIH AND OTHERWISE WORK WITH OIH IN PREPARING APPROPRIATE RESPONSE.

6. FOR EMBASSY'S INFORMATION, HEW/OIH HAS THE FOLLOWING MORE CANDID VIEW OF GOMAA'S CURRENT PROPOSAL. OIH WOULD BE INCLINED TO SUPPORT ONLY THE COSTS OF PERSONNEL REQUIRED IN THAT PROPOSAL WITH PERHAPS THE EXCEPTION OF A PHOTOCOPIER AND ENGLISH TYPEWRITERS NEEDED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION COPIES TO THE U.S. THIS WOULD SEEM TO ASSIST THE MOH WITH THEIR OVERRIDING PROBLEM IN GETTING AROUND THE GOE CIVIL SERVICE COMPLICATIONS. OIH WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE GOE/MOH SHARING IN THE RESPONSIBILITIES TO IMPROVE THE COORDINATION OF THIS PROGRAM. THE SUPPORT OF SOMETHING LESS THAN \$10,000 PER YEAR WOULD BE A SMALL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DRAIN ON SFCP AND WOULD PROBABLY REALIZE WIDE SPREAD
BENEFITS. OIH WOULD ALSO NOTE THAT THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR
THE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SHOULD BE STRICTLU LIMITED TO
JWGMC ACTIVITIES. CHRISTOPHER

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